



## Chapter Eight

### Inclusive Recreation

Recreation is an important piece of living a full life for anyone of any age. Ensuring that your family member takes part in inclusive recreation is key to their quality of life, self-esteem, and self-confidence. By participating in recreation activities, your family member will also naturally build friendships and develop their co-operation, communication, and social skills.

#### Fostering Independence

You may feel the need to protect your child from all the risks in everyday life. The tendency to overprotect will be strong, however, there is much value in allowing your family member the opportunity for involvement in the community and for developing other relationships. We advise that you be aware and realistic about the safety of recreational activities, but make an effort to take part in recreation wherever possible.

#### Making Recreation Inclusive

People who coordinate recreational activities may not know how to adapt activities for persons with intellectual or other disabilities. The first thing to remember is, adapt only when necessary. There are many great books and websites on adapting equipment and activities for people with disabilities. Here are a few general tips that could help your child's coaches to make recreation inclusive:

- Ask the person what they need in order to participate.
- Use plain language.
- Use verbal prompts, pictures, videos, visual aids, or demonstrations.
- Teach only one skill at a time.
- Use physical guidance.
- Use positive reinforcement and feedback often.
- Encourage teamwork.
- Build in routines and repetition (but make sure that it is not boring).
- If a participant communicates differently, help the others understand how to communicate with them.

## 8.1 Special Olympics

Special Olympics (SO) is the world's largest sports organization for people of all ages with intellectual disabilities. It provides people with access to a variety of different individual and team sports. Each community program is run by volunteer coaches, who organize and run their team's practices and are overseen by SO Saskatchewan. The programs can range from competitive teams to play-based programs and typically practice more than once a week and travel to other communities to engage in competitions.

SO also has an inclusive program called Special Olympics Unified Sport, where athletes with and without disabilities compete on the same teams. This program allows athletes from different backgrounds to compete together, gain valuable competition experience and make new friends. If you are looking for a list of all current SO sports offered in the province, head to SO Saskatchewan's website at: [www.specialolympics.ca/saskatchewan](http://www.specialolympics.ca/saskatchewan).



## 8.2 Summer Camps

Attending camp allows children a chance to get away from their routine for a week, meet new friends and spend time outdoors. Each summer, many children with intellectual disabilities attend regular summer camps. Most camps are happy to include all children and some parents have found that their child does not need extra support beyond what the camp offers. To find a good summer camp in your area, start with the Saskatchewan Camps Association website at [www.saskcamps.ca](http://www.saskcamps.ca). Most camps have said they would include a child with an intellectual disability, although some may require additional supports to be in place. If your child needs additional support, a camp companion or support worker could be the solution. Some parents have used CLSD respite dollars towards a camp companion. Some INSK branches and other disability groups offer inclusive summer programs.

**Camp Easter Seal** is a barrier-free camp at Manitou Beach. This camp is only for children and adults experiencing complex physical and intellectual disabilities. Space is extremely limited. Some campers like to mix it up and try both Camp Easter Seal and a regular camp.

## 8.3 Summer Day Programs

If your child is not ready for a week away from home at camp, there are summer day programs. SaskAbilities offers a Summer Fun Program in four major Saskatchewan centres all summer long. Participants meet for a minimum of two activities per week for each camper. Other similar day programs are offered by some of the INSK branches as well.

## 8.4 Volunteer Opportunities

There are lots of places where young adults can volunteer, such as at the animal shelter, a retirement home, winter games, summer festivals, a church, or a non-profit organization. This will give your child an opportunity to be involved in the community, gain work experience, or just have fun meeting new people and making a difference. Volunteering is even something you can do as a family. One family of a child with an intellectual disability volunteered together at the SPCA, helping take care of the animals. Becoming a volunteer will create new friends and new experiences, as well as help the community at the same time.

## 8.5 Access 2 Pass

Access 2 is a program created by Easter Seals Canada to alleviate some of the financial burden that some people with intellectual disabilities face. When someone with a disability requires a support person to accompany them in the community, they are still required to pay admission fees for that support. However, with the creation of Access 2, individuals can bring a support at no extra cost. The Access 2 Pass encourages everyone to live a healthy and active lifestyle, while also taking part in multi-cultural experiences.

The Access 2 Pass is for people of all ages and types of disabilities who require support and assistance. There are hundreds of participating entertainment, cultural, and recreational venues across Canada. Once the Pass is obtained, you can take it to partnered venues with the Access 2 program, and with the price of one general admission, you will receive a second admission pass for your support aide at no extra cost. More information along with application forms is available online on Access 2's website.

## 8.6 Leisure Access Programs

Many cities have community leisure facilities and programs that run throughout the year. There can be drop-in programs at leisure centres along with different activities offered depending on which city you live in and what they offer. For example; public skating, workout facilities, drop-in classes, and access to swimming pools. Sometimes the fees for these passes can be a little costly; however, some cities offer programs where eligible low-income residents are able to participate in the leisure facilities and programs at a discounted rate. Check with your city to see if they offer discounted passes and if you qualify.

## 8.7 Discounted Bus Pass Program

The Discounted Bus Pass Program allows people with lower incomes to access public transportation. Discounted bus passes are available to people who are currently receiving benefits from at least one of the following programs:

- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES).
- Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS).
- Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability Program (SAID)

## 8.8 Driving Assessment

Some individuals with intellectual disabilities have received their license and have their own vehicles. If this is one of your child's goals, there is support available. The Driver Evaluation Program offered by Kinetik, a SK Health Region program at the Saskatoon City Hospital, provides a standardized objective assessment to determine a person's ability to operate a motor vehicle safely. A driver evaluation may benefit any person with cognitive, perceptual, physical, or medical limitations that may impact their functional ability to drive. It may also be useful for individuals who have never driven before and have significant disabilities that may require special adaptations to the vehicle.

## 8.9 Community Inclusion Programs

As your child grows into adulthood, community inclusion programs (also known as day programs) may be a fit for your child depending on their wishes and goals. Most community inclusion programs are available through Community Living Service Delivery (CLSD) so if this is something your family member is interested in, connect with your child's Community Support Worker (CSW) and ask about the options. The CSW can provide ideas and set up tours to find a community inclusion program that is the best fit for your child. For example, some community inclusion programs take place in the community, some at an agency, and some have a combination of both. This process can take some time so if this is something your child may be interested in, tell the CSW well in advance.